

# ARIZONA NEWS RELEASE

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*Press Release Announcement - January 25, 2005- For Immediate Release*

## ARIZONA AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS PROVIDE FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Phoenix - Agricultural producers must maintain a competitive edge to operate in a global market since they produce far beyond domestic demand. In recent years, changes in the rules of trade, shifts in domestic policy and new developments in technology have altered the landscape of global agriculture and the challenges facing Arizona farmers and ranchers.

How are agricultural producers surviving when input costs such as hired labor, fertilizer, and fuel costs continue to rise? Are government program payments providing producers an adequate safety-net to allow them to make investments in land and equipment required of modern farming? Which agriculture sectors show improvement or are under financial stress?

Arizona Agricultural Statistics will give Arizona agricultural producers the chance to answer these and other questions by participating in the 2004 Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS). This survey is the key financial information tool that provides the leading economic indicators of state and national agriculture for producers, agribusinesses, and government. The results will show the impact of the shifting global market, farmer production decisions, and governmental policies on the agricultural economy.

“Reliable, accurate descriptions of the current economic health of Arizona farms and ranches are crucial,” said Steven Manheimer, State Director at Ag Statistics, “especially when policymakers, farm organizations, analysts, local USDA agents, lenders, and others make decisions that affect growers.” “For example, in 2003, the Farm Services Agency (FSA) distributed to producers \$15.9 billion in farm program payments nationally, \$2.2 billion in conservation funding and 3.1 billion in emergency loans. Data from the ARMS is used to measure the benefits of direct, counter-cyclical, and ad hoc emergency payments as producers continue to look to the marketplace for economic reward.”

“Congress studies the results from ARMS studies carefully when they craft Farm Bills,” adds Manheimer.

“ARMS is one of the best information sources that Congress has to evaluate the economic conditions of agriculture.”

Producers chosen to participate in the 2004 Agricultural Resource Management Survey will be visited by an interviewer to complete the report at the farm or ranch operator’s convenience. Results will be published in a series of USDA reports on the current farm financial situation. All individual data collected are held strictly confidential by law (Title 7, U.S. Code). Only statistical totals are published for selected geographic regions and the Nation.